

heartland. It undermines the economic security of hundreds of thousands of workers within our State and millions more across our Nation. Following the original NAFTA's implementation, town after town was emptied out of good jobs with good wages and benefits as jobs were outsourced south of our border.

America has borne witness to NAFTA's vast job outsourcing and wage drag. Millions have suffered firsthand as dire predictions actualized and the grandiose promises of job creation failed to materialize. Our Nation has lost thousands of jobs to penny-wage environments where workers cannot even afford to buy the goods they make. They toil in sweatshops and maquiladoras, exposed to unimaginable toxins and unsafe working conditions. The original NAFTA fueled massive peasant migration from Mexico's countryside to our Nation as thousands of subsidized farmers in Mexico had livelihoods extinguished. Mexico's white corn industry disappeared. It was decimated.

What a humanitarian tragedy is NAFTA. If anyone cares about people, not just goods, listen to my words: America must wake up to the impact our trade deals impose on people when negotiating with unequal economies.

Just look to the devastation levied when multinational corporate interests dominate negotiations. Transnational banks and multinational corporations put a heavy thumb on the scales of economic justice for the poorest and for workers in our country as well as Third World economies. They exploit powerless people. Trade with our closest neighbors is never simply a zero-sum game.

In the nearly three decades since NAFTA's original passage, our Nation has not even had 1 year of balanced trade accounts with Mexico and Canada. It has always been in the red.

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Indeed, the NAFTA deal has managed to add over \$1 trillion to America's trade deficits—red ink—and millions and millions of outsourced U.S. jobs.

Mr. Speaker, NAFTA renegotiation is too important an opportunity to hang on faulty assumptions. America fell for that back in 1993. We cannot let it happen again.

The devil is in the details. Incremental progress to uplift North American workers devastated by the original agreement will not be enough.

With the release of text, which remains unfinished and unresolved, comes the task to determine whether the job outsourcing bonanza that has taken hold since NAFTA's passage in 1994 has truly been addressed.

Let me ask:

Have strong, enforceable labor standards been included, subject to swift and certain enforcement?

Will transnational corporate interests retain the means to outsource American jobs to take advantage of rock-bottom wages in Mexico?

Will we protect the rights of Americans to know what is in the imported food they are feeding their families, or will trade facilitation hold priority over food safety for people?

Will Americans have access to affordable prescription drugs, or will the new NAFTA further rig the system to delay access to more affordable, safe generic drugs and biosimilars?

Let me ask people who visit Ohio to witness vivid evidence of a trade agreement that failed America's workers and communities as plant after plant shuts down. Beyond just the NAFTA trade deficit, all our global trade deficits have ballooned under this administration's erratic trade agenda.

In this wake, a modern NAFTA agreement to correct these injustices is long overdue. I have eagerly anticipated the release of specific text and a strategic agenda from this administration on how President Trump plans to bring living wage jobs back to America. Anything short of specifics that will clearly improve job prospects for Americans will fall short of the President's promises.

Congress must not rush any deal of such magnitude by only letting the executive branch negotiate. Democrats have called on this administration to work with Congress to reach necessary and substantive achievements beneficial for all Americans. No more fast track. No more.

Any new North American trade agreement must raise wages. It must create jobs in America and create a level playing field across the board.

Mr. Speaker, after a quarter century of job hemorrhaging and the upending of American workers and livelihoods, NAFTA must result in rising standards of living and new jobs that create real wages and benefits here in our country.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DAMON P. NELSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise also this morning to honor the life and legacy of my friend, Damon Nelson.

A lot of wonderful, lofty things have been said about him this morning in this Chamber. Every single one of those was true. I certainly identify with each and every one of those remarks. I will not repeat those but will walk a different path.

I did not realize the extent to which Damon impacted staffing across the Hill. Once he passed, I began to get information about folks whose lives had been touched and whose careers here in Washington had been started as a result of being hired and mentored by Damon over the years. There are people on my personal staff whom I did not realize had a direct connection to Damon because he had started their careers here in Congress and on the Hill through his mentorship and help.

I got to know Damon extremely well as a result of working on the House

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and his role as staff director, particularly when I took over running the Russia investigation. Damon was my direct contact with the staff. He did a masterful job at trying to expeditiously conduct that investigation, making sure that we dotted the i's and crossed the t's, making some really difficult decisions as we walked that path.

In addition to that, Damon handled the rest of the business of the Intelligence Committee, that important business that continues to go on in addition to the Russian investigation, doing a masterful job of shepherding all of that responsibility. He did it with class. He did it with a calmness and a self-assuredness that made it work.

Damon's humor and, yes, sarcasm, which has been mentioned often today, was a signature of his, but he used it well and in an appropriate manner. It was never in a hurtful or harmful manner, but to keep up the atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, Damon's memory will live on in all our lives. Those of us who knew him will not forget him. He was that kind of an individual.

Obviously, my heart and prayers go out to his wife, Dana, and his family. He adored, loved, and worshipped his wife. She is in a hurting place today, as is his family.

All of us who knew him as a friend will miss him. Mr. Speaker, I miss my friend.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, I also rise to honor my good friend, Damon. He was a dear friend, trusted colleague, loving husband, and a warrior who loved and served his country. We will miss him.

Very briefly, I would like to make the observation that the staffs that we work with here on the Hill are some of the finest men and women in the country, and the staff that we work with on the Intelligence Committee is the finest of them all. Damon was their leader. He was looked to for his leadership, for his compassion, for his humanity, and for his example of what it meant to be a warrior.

I also have to mention his family, as we honor them as well. Some of you know that I wear my father's Air Force wings. My brothers have served in the Air Force. I served in the Air Force. So did Damon's family.

Yesterday, I had the honor of meeting his father and mother, both retired Air Force who have served valiantly and served proudly, also his brother. I have to mention his wife, an Air Force colonel, who is a leader, a rock.

Having met her, I can tell you that I would follow her into battle. She is a great example of the finest young men and women that our Nation has to offer. This family has proven that they love their country by serving their country. We honor them in this small way today in the words that we say.

Damon, God bless you. To Damon's family, God bless you. Thank you for

generations of service to your country and for being an example to all of us.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, we had an opportunity yesterday to share with Dana, his wife, his mom and step-dad and hear the staff talk about Damon. It was clear that Damon had created a family, that they loved him, that they respected him as a professional, and that his leadership was evident across this entire exchange. It was heartwarming to hear those stories about Damon and the way he led the staff of the committee.

We will miss him. I ask our Nation to continue to pray for his wife and family as they walk this dark path, knowing that he made this world a better place to live and that he helped mightily across a long period of time to help protect us from some really bad folks.

We love you, Damon Nelson, and we will miss you.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, this is American Education Week, and I rise to honor and thank the teachers and school administrators who have dedicated their lives to ensure our future generations are stronger than ever.

There are over 50 million kids in our public schools today. Back in 2015, before the Every Student Succeeds Act was signed into law, the Federal approach to education relied heavily on standardized testing to measure academic achievement. While I understand the importance of testing to measure academic growth from year to year, there should be a number of indicators for evaluating academic success and improvement for both schools and students.

After that bill passed in 2015, the goal shifted from teaching children more efficiently to inspiring lifelong learning in students. I applaud educators for embracing this goal, and I am hopeful that this approach will better prepare millions of students for the challenges that await them in life and in the workforce.

While on the subject of Federal education, we cannot avoid the debate over the amount of taxpayer money we send to schools throughout the country. There is and always will be bipartisan agreement that we should make sure schools have the resources they need in order to be successful. But in the coming appropriations cycle, and in future ones, we must also remember that additional spending does not necessarily improve student performance. This has been proven time and time again, Mr. Speaker.

One data point I would refer folks to is high school graduation rates, which have remained stagnant since the 1970s. What we have seen is very unfortunate: the system continues to grind forward, with costs going up each year and our

efficiency going in the opposite direction.

I will continue to fight for education reforms aimed at improving resource allocation and boosting student performance. Recognizing the shortfalls within our K-12 education may not be a popular talking point, but I think it is worth emphasizing the need to act responsibly and address the problems students, parents, and educators face.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by saying two things. The first is a simple thank you to the teachers, including those teachers in my own family, who have dedicated their life to serving students. Your hard work does not go unnoticed. The second thing is that I will work hard to improve our education system for students in my district and around the country.

CITY OF DAVID

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, last month, I was privileged to stand in the city of David, the site of ancient Jerusalem.

Just a few feet from the Western Wall, the city of David is the place where Jerusalem began. It is a place I have regularly visited over the past few years, joined by my fellow Members of Congress, Republicans and Democrats alike.

I can think of no better place than the city of David to express that the United States knows what the Jewish people have known for 3,000 years: Jerusalem is the historic capital of Israel.

This reality was reinforced when the United States correctly relocated our Embassy to Jerusalem earlier this year. I call upon more countries to do the same.

The historic bond is evidenced by the incredible discoveries that are being unearthed in the archeological excavations throughout the city of David. These excavations affirm the millennia-old connection of the Jewish people to Jerusalem not as a matter of faith, but as a matter of historical fact, despite UNESCO's ongoing, shameful efforts to declare otherwise.

Among the most significant discoveries presently being unearthed in the city of David is the ancient pilgrimage road. Built over 2,000 years ago, the pilgrimage road, running from the Pool of Siloam at the southern tip of the city of David to the footsteps of the Western Wall and Temple Mount, served as the main thoroughfare of the Second Temple Jerusalem. Millions of people joined together to ascend to the temple during the festivals of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

Both the pilgrimage road and the Pool of Siloam have deep significance to Jews and Christians alike. It holds profound meaning to countless millions of Americans. Antiquities discov-

ered along the pilgrimage road tell the story of both the vibrant culture of the Second Temple period Jerusalem and the devastating destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans, which ended tragically in the year 70 C.E.

In the future, visitors of all faiths and backgrounds will be able to walk this route of their ancestors, upon the very flagstones as their ancestors 2,000 years ago.

In the Givati parking lot excavation, another excavation in the city of David, 10 layers of ancient Jerusalem civilization dating back some 2,700 years have been uncovered. The layers include Jewish, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Persian, Muslim, Crusader, and Ottoman. So each visitor to the city of David can truly say: "I also have a connection to Jerusalem."

In this very excavation, as you can see in this poster, in a structure dating back 2,500 years to the Biblical First Temple period in Jerusalem, a seal with ancient Hebrew writing was found. I have a replica of that seal in my office, which was presented to me in a meeting I had with Ze'ev Orenstein, a representative from the city of David, together with my colleague, Congressman ELIOT ENGEL. On the seal was the name Eliana, daughter of Ga'el. I can't even begin to describe my emotions when I learned that a seal with almost my very own name was found in the city of David.

I, like countless Americans, feel a deep, personal connection to Jerusalem, her history, her heritage, and her holiness.

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In fact, it is only over the last 51 years of Israel's sovereignty in Jerusalem that people of all faiths and all backgrounds have enjoyed freedom of access and worship at their holy sites, whether they are Christians, whether they are Jewish, whether they are Muslims. Such freedoms cannot be taken for granted in the Middle East where, with the very exception of Israel, the only democracy in the region, they are not easy to find.

During the nearly 3 decades that I have had the honor of serving this wonderful institution, support for Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish State of Israel has been bipartisan, and I call on my colleagues from both sides of the aisle in the coming Congress to ensure that that never changes, to ensure that the historic bond between the Jewish people and Jerusalem remains undeniable.

Together with millions of Americans, I salute the work of the City of David Foundation and especially my friend Ze'ev, who did not even want me to mention him—tough—in uncovering our shared history in Jerusalem, making it accessible to all of us who want to experience these discoveries for themselves.

So congratulations to Ze'ev—I have said it again—for the discoveries at the City of David. Many more to come.